

EXECUTIVE DEAN
OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Report to the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture
April 2012

Spotlight on New Jersey Junior Breeder and Young Farmer Symposium

The Round House Barn on the George H. Cook Campus, of the Rutgers School of Environmental and Biological Sciences in New Brunswick, was the host location for the past 11 years of the highly-anticipated New Jersey Breeder and Young Farmer Symposium on March 31. A day-long event designed to instruct young farmers on a number of important topics, it is hosted by the New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA) and Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE). The symposium attracted over 200 participants this year.



Presenter Eric Sortore instructing a youngster during the session on "Building a Foldable Milking Stand that Doubles as a Wheelbarrow for Tack"

Rutgers presenters included **Mike Westendorf** and **Carey Williams** (associate extension specialists); **Carol Ward** (4-H agent, Somerset County); **Chad Ripberger** (4-H agent and department head, RCE of Mercer County); **Clint Burgher** (acting director, Animal Care Program Farm); and **Joanne Powell** (farm supervisor). Lynn Mathews, NJDA, serves as coordinator of the symposium, which is supported by First Pioneer Farm Credit and Hart Agency/Farm Family Insurance. According to Mathews, this event began under the leadership of Art Brown, former New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture from 1982 to 2002 and pioneer of the *Jersey Fresh* program. Brown served as an RCE agricultural agent before he was appointed Secretary of Agriculture by then New Jersey Governor Tom Kean in 1982.



Dr. Lynsey Makkreel from Keenan-McAlister Equine Practice (at left) making her presentation on "Diagnosing Lameness and Other Conditions" at the symposium.

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Spotlight

Organic Land Care Certification Program

Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) of Essex and Middlesex counties began a unique collaboration with the New Jersey chapter of the Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOFA) to implement an Organic Land Care Certification Program for professional landscapers. The one-day workshop, "Introduction to Organic Land Care," was held in Middlesex County on March 20 and Essex County on March 26, and attracted over 40 land care professionals. The workshop focused on organic management and improvement of soil, organic options for turf, water conservation/native plants, identification of common insects, and organic options for control.)



Dan Kluchinski, assistant director, RCE, presents at the Essex County session.

The overall program has the potential to impact close to 1,300 acres of golf courses, athletic fields, parks, and residential lawns statewide.

The timing for this program is ideal, as effective January 5 this year, the New Jersey fertilizer law went into effect. This law was developed to protect surface and ground waters from excess pollution by minimizing nitrogen and phosphorous inputs derived

from lawn fertilizer. Landscapers will be restricted as to when and how much fertilizer can be applied throughout the year. Training is needed on more environmentally friendly solutions that not only maintain beautiful lawns, parks, and turf but also improve watershed health through reducing stormwater runoff and nonpoint source pollution, and recharge groundwater supplies.



Michele Bakacs presents at the Middlesex County session.

The project team consisted of **Jan Zientek** (senior program coordinator, Essex County); **Amy Rowe** (environmental and resource management agent, Essex and Passaic counties); **Bill Hlubik** (agricultural and resource management agent, Middlesex County); and **Michele Bakacs** (environmental and resource management agent, Middlesex and Union counties). Next steps in the program are to convene an Organic Land Care Working Group with representatives from the land care industry, NOFA-NJ, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, and other RCE technical experts. Landscapers who attended

the March workshops gave very high rating to the overall instruction, teaching, and program content. They indicated a strong likelihood they would use what they learned in their business and work activities, as well as educating others about what they had learned.

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Spotlight

Rotary International and Rutgers Launch Enabling Gardens Initiative

On March 23, the Rutgers Floriculture Greenhouses at the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences was the site of a unique pilot hands-on gardening and greening event symbolizing the start of its first growing season. The Rotary and Rutgers Enabling Garden Initiative for Central New Jersey, which promotes the benefits of working with plants to all, irrespective of age, physical, mental, emotional, social or other limitations, is co-coordinated by **Nick Polanin** (agricultural and resource management agent, Somerset County) and Laura DePrado, Rotary International member and chair of the joint Rotary-Rutgers project.



L-R: Al Murray; Senator Kip Bateman; Laura DePrado; **Nick Polanin**; and **Bob Goodman**.

Speakers included NJ Senator Christopher “Kip” Bateman, R-16; Executive Dean **Robert M. Goodman**; Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Al Murray, New Jersey Department of Agriculture; and Megan Jones-Holt, Rotary District Governor. Participants included Freeholder board representative from Somerset County Peter Palmer; and representatives from the five counties of



Joel Flagler demonstrates the use of adjustable planting tools to Ed Rosenhaff, a recovering stroke victim and member of the Union County Rotary club.

Rotary International District 7510, which include Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Somerset and Union counties. **Michele Bakacs** (agricultural and resource management agent, Middlesex and Union counties) conducted two sessions on how to make a rain barrel while **Nikki Graf** (research farm supervisor) conducted the planting sessions. Also participating were **Laura Lawson** (chair, Landscape Architecture); **Seiko Goto** (Landscape Architecture); and **Joel Flagler** (department head; agricultural resource management agent, Bergen County). Pilot sites in the five-county region of Central New Jersey have been chosen to host and implement enabling garden spaces. University expertise in this initiative will include consumer horticulture, agriculture and plant science, soil sciences, landscape design, and volunteer development. Read [more](#) on this project. View event images at the Gannett News [photo gallery](#).

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Faculty and Staff Activities and Accomplishments

Lifetime Achievement for Service to Shellfisheries

On March 28, **Susan Ford**, Professor Emeritus of **Marine and Coastal Sciences** and **John Kraeuter**, Associate Director of the **Haskin Shellfish Research Laboratory** became Honored Life Members of the National Shellfisheries Association (NSA) at its the 104th Annual Business Luncheon in Seattle, WA. One of the oldest scientific associations in North America, NSA has a long and significant history with strong connections to Rutgers and remains a vibrant professional association linking science with industry in the management of shellfish.

Ford's recognition by the association dates back to 1971 when she won the Thurlow C. Nelson Award for her presentation, "MSX-10 years in the Lower Delaware Bay." She was the fifth



L-R: **Susan Ford**; LeRoy Creswell, president, NSA; and **John Kraeuter** at the 104th NSA luncheon in WA

recipient, and the first woman, to win that award. Ford has been appointed to the editorial board of several journals during her career, including the *Journal of Shellfish Research*, *Diseases of Aquatic Organism* and the *Journal of Invertebrate Pathology*. She is routinely sought out to serve as an expert on national and international review panels, and currently serves as the only U.S. representative on the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea's Working Group on Pathology and Diseases of Marine Organisms. **Kraeuter** is an estuarine ecologist, well-respected nationally and internationally for his work on shellfish, particularly hard clams (eastern quahogs). He developed an outstanding reputation

among colleagues worldwide for his work with NSA past president and honored life member, Mike Castagna, at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science's Eastern Shore Laboratory in Wachapreague, VA. Kraeuter and Castagna perfected hard clam aquaculture methods and produced the "Manual for growing the hard clam, *Mercenaria*," a publication considered the bible for hard clam aquaculturists. Past NSA presidents drawn from the Rutgers community include Kraeuter, **Dave Bushek**, **Rich Lutz**, **Hal Haskin**, **Thurlow Nelson**, and **Julius Nelson**.

Serving the New Jersey Equine Industry

Karyn Malinowski (director, Rutgers Equine Science Center) co-hosted a round-table discussion with the Standardbred Breeders and Owners Association–NJ for State Assemblymen Ronald Dancer (R-12) and Robert Clifton (R-12) on March 28. The purpose of the meeting was to identify key issues facing the equine industry in the state of New Jersey. Continuing her support and advocacy of the industry, Malinowski presented "Regional Challenges Facing the Horse Racing Industry: A look at Pennsylvania's economic and agricultural viability for a sustainable future" at the Pennsylvania Horse conference in Harrisburg, PA, on March 14. Malinowski was most recently recognized with the 2012 Equine Science Award from the American Society of Animal Science.

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Outreach Efforts: Public/Community Service

Insect and Disease Forecasting Tool

For the second season, NJAES has partnered with the Network for Environmental and Weather Applications (NEWA) at Cornell University to bring insect and disease forecasting support to farmers and agricultural advisors. Last year, the Outer Coastal Plain Vineyard Association facilitated access to NEWA. This year, NJAES has provided funding for this online tool to integrate New Jersey's weather stations data with NEWA. The NJwxnet weather stations are maintained by the office of the New Jersey State Climatologist **David Robinson**. The NEWA website is available at <http://newa.cornell.edu>. The Rutgers Snyder Farm website provides an informative weather-pest forecasting portal with in-depth instructions on how to maximize the NEWA resources at <http://snyderfarm.rutgers.edu/weather-pest-forecasting.html>. NJAES specialists and agents assist growers with pest and disease management through weekly reports, newsletters, and workshops. They include **Win Cowgill** (apples); **Joe Mahar** (vegetables); **Andy Wyenandt** (potato and tomato); and **Peter Oudemans** (small fruit and wine grapes). Learn more on NEWA and existing Rutgers IPM scouting and advisory programs at Sustaining Farming on the Urban Fringe: <http://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/urbanfringe/pdfs/urbanfringe-v06n04.pdf>.



Mark Your Calendars!

Bee-ginner's Beekeeping

WHEN: April 26-28, 2012.

WHAT: A two and a half-day program that provides comprehensive information and hands-on experience to help residents start and maintain a honey bee colony.

MORE INFO: Contact Dalynn Knigge, Knigge@njaes.rutgers.edu, 732-932-9271, ext. 622. <http://www.cpe.rutgers.edu/courses/current/ae0401cb.html>.

Ag Field Day at Rutgers Day

WHEN: April 28, 2012, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

WHERE: Gorge H. Cook Campus, New Brunswick, NJ.

WHAT: The annual event started by the State Board of Agriculture in 1906 for New Jersey farmers to better acquaint them with the experiments being conducted at the experiment station.

CONTACT: Mike Green green@aesop.rutgers.edu at 848-932-4201. <http://agfieldday.rutgers.edu/>.

Herbaceous Plants

WHEN: May 15, 2012, 9 a.m. to noon.

WHERE: Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Cumberland County, 291 Morton Ave., Rosenhayn, NJ.

WHAT: This class is part of the Rutgers Master Gardeners Program training.

MORE INFO: Call 856-451-2800, ext. 1.

This report is produced by the Office of Communications and is available online at <http://execdeanagriculture.rutgers.edu/boa/>.

For information or to provide comments, please contact Paula Walcott-Quintin at quintin@aesop.rutgers.edu or 848-932-4204.



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